Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Project

SOVEREIGN NATIONS

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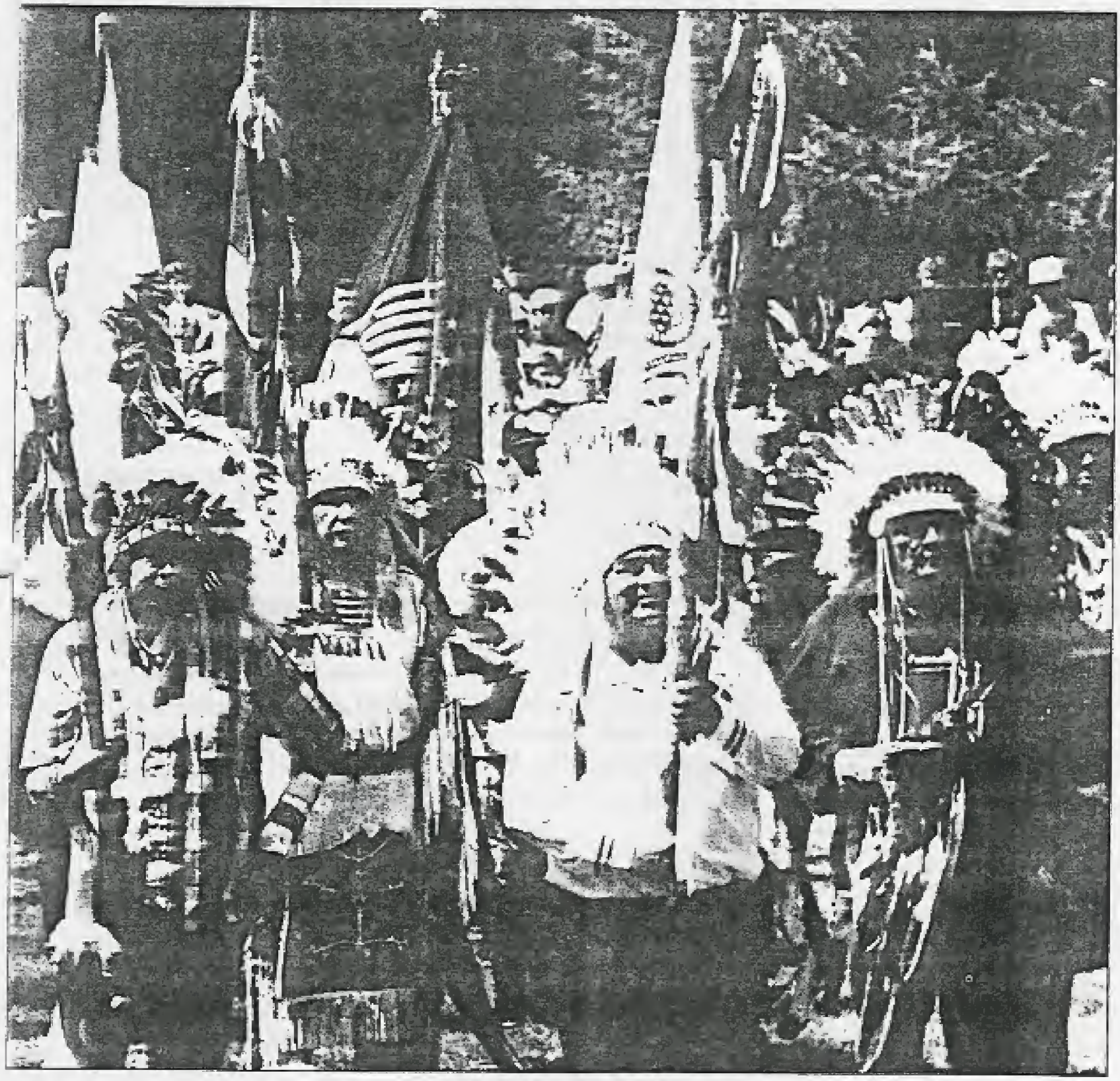

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Why Is Tribal Access to Self-Governance Limited?

Editor's Note: Letters for this column are encouraged from all readers. We may not be able to print all of them, due to space limitations. But all will be answered. Please send your letters to SOVEREIGN NATIONS, c/o Maureen Kinley, Coordinator of Communication and Education, Self-Governance Demonstration Project, Lummi Indian Business Council, 2616 Kwina Road, Bellingham, WA 98226.

Dear Editor:

The Tribes have practiced self-governance, at one level or another, for thousands of years. Why, specifically, is it then necessary for Tribes interested in the Self-Governance Demonstration Project to be excluded? Why is it necessary for the number of participating Tribes to be limited to 30, or any other number?

David Whitener
Squaxin Island Tribe

Dear Mr. Whitener:

The Self-Governance Demonstration Project has been purposely designed as an experiment to determine both the possibilities and problems involved in Tribes negotiating the transfer of "programs, services, functions and activities" from principally the BIA, and beginning in FY 94, the IHS, to Tribal Councils for priority allocations and management. So often in the past, legislation with well-intended Indian Affairs policy has been enacted by Congress at the request of Tribes with unexpected, sometimes negative results. The fact that the BIA and IHS have yet to publish rules and regulations for P.L. 100-472, the "Indian Self-Determination Act Amendments of 1988" is a prime example. The Demonstration Project is intended to test this new policy, determine needed improvements, and include these documented needs in any permanent legislation. This documentation can best be accomplished with a small number of Tribes.

A more practical factor for the thirty Tribe limit in the Demonstration Project is the capability of the BIA or IHS to effectively transfer negotiated resources to participating Tribes and still maintain the same level of services to other Tribes, particularly in multi-Tribe Agency/Area situations. The authorizing law stipulates the Project cannot negatively affect other Tribes. If there were no limit to the number of Tribes to be involved in the Demonstration, you can imagine the administrative chaos and confusion if an unlimited number of Tribes in a multi-Tribe Agency decided to negotiate resource transfers in a given year. The result would likely be no transfers or very limited change in the bureaucracy due to their inability to administratively reduce or reorganize on such short notice.

The Demonstration Project, so far, has shown a definite BIA reluctance to reduce or reorganize. This experience will certainly be addressed in permanent legislation. The permanent legislation will likely limit the number of Tribes to thirty each year allowed to negotiate Self-Governance Compacts and Annual Funding Agreements, with a limitation to given multi-Tribe Area/Agency situations to allow for an orderly transfer of resources and Federal reduction and reorganization. The very nature of the Self-Governance Project will create change in the Federal bureaucracy and empower Tribes to govern more effectively. This change, however, needs to be planned and orderly to respect each Tribe's sovereign right to determine its government-to-government relationship with the United States.

Thanks for your inquiry. Hopefully your question has been answered.

The Editors

SOVEREIGN NATIONS

SOVEREIGN NATIONS is a monthly publication of the Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Project. The purpose of the publication is to disseminate accurate information about Self-Governance. Complimentary subscriptions are available through the Communication & Education Project. Materials contained herein can be reproduced, with proper credits. Appropriate editorial contributions and correspondence are welcome.

Self-Governance is a tribally driven initiative intended to provide tribal governments more control over their own destinies. The project fosters the shaping of a "new partnership" between tribal governments and the government of the United States. We believe that excellence in related communication and education is fundamental to the achievement of these goals.

Note to contributors/editors:

We encourage your input, but cannot guarantee acceptance due to time and space constraints inherent in the publication of this newsletter.

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"These are things that I see. I have a grandmother who's 90 years old. Her name is Katie Blue Thunder. She stays in a senior citizens' complex that's fenced up. However, she gets very upset if us grandchildren don't go there and take her out of there. So she only stays there. One of my aunts or grandchildren stays there with her too, to keep her company. But she doesn't stay there all day long, or all week. She makes darned sure that one of us gets there and takes her out and takes her to our homes.

"Now, for her to stay there and qualify for some benefits, elderly nutrition, transportation, commodities – she has to stay there. That's not our way. We're saying that Demonstration Tribes are models. We can produce a better way to service our people and to help ourselves become more efficient."

– Alex Lunderman, *President*
Rosebud Sioux Tribe

ON THE COVER: Scene from the Siletz Tribe's annual Pow Wow, second largest in the state of Oregon.

Sam Cagey 1924 – 1993

Sam Cagey Sr., one of the founding leaders of the Self-Governance Demonstration Project, died at his home on the Lummi Reservation from natural causes at the age of 68 on Saturday, Feb. 20.

Cagey, a long-time crusader for Indian rights throughout the United States, served the Lummi Nation as a council member for 23 years, including more than one term as Tribal Chairman. He had been sworn into the Lummi Council for his 24th term on Feb. 2, 1993.

Tribal sovereignty was his lifelong vision. Although this goal wasn't entirely achieved in his lifetime, he helped Tribes advance much closer to this reality, and his life provided clear direction to us all.

Known affectionately as Grandfather by most of the children of the Tribe, Cagey had lived on the reservation all his life, and was a tribal fisherman who was deeply involved in many of the most critical Indian issues of the century. In addition to Self-Governance, he was instrumental in starting and/or strengthening tribal sovereignty through federal recognition of treaty fishing rights, environmental and water rights, improved education opportunities, gaming rights, income tax exemption rights and improved health treatment programs. He helped create the Tribal Aquaculture Project, the Tribe's two fish hatcheries and the Tribe's shellfish aquaculture program. He was also instrumental in the development of the Tribe's sewage system, one of the best on any reservation. As was typical of Sam, he battled federal, state and local officials for this system, and won. He was a long-time activist at the local, state, national and international levels, and was known far and wide for his wisdom and dedication as well as his charisma and sense of humor.

Violet Hillaire, who worked with Cagey on Indian health and social service issues, said, "Sam was a guy who would go down fighting for what he believed in. He could get in doors where other people couldn't." Hillaire said he could make people laugh, recalling a time when he testified before a Congressional committee, telling the members that the United States owed him a billion dollars in lost fishing and water rights. "He made his point for Indians," she said.

It was much to the benefit of Self-Governance Tribes that Cagey carried the same charisma and go-power into the effort to establish the Demonstration Project. He was one of the first to conceive of it, and never tired of promoting it throughout the country.

More than 1,500 people attended his funeral, which was held Friday, February 26, on the Lummi Reservation.

Poem for Grandfather

We love you Grandfather
The children said,
As we lay his body
Into its final bed.

We all knew
His spirit had gone
From the Earth around us
To the life beyond.

The Eagles soared
On the winds above.
And we all felt warmth
From his undying love.

He is still with us.
He inspires us still:
We are directed
By the strength of his will.

His message to us
Is spoken in the breeze:
His words resound
In the wind-blown trees.

Stand up and be counted.
We people of the Earth:
Stand up and speak out,
Let today be our birth.

Grandfather's spirit
Still points the way,
His message is strong,
We have much to say.

We have much to do,
We have much to be;
We have inspiration
In our quest to be free.

We thank you, Sam,
For all that you gave,
We learned from your life,
As well as your grave.

Embarking Upon New Frontiers

by Lynda J. Jolly, Self-Governance Coordinator,
Quinault Indian Nation

Self-Governance: Not a New Idea

With all the pomp and circumstance over Columbus' arrival on our shores 500 years ago, it is time for Native Peoples worldwide to pause and reflect, and wonder how we survived these centuries of domination and "civilization" of Indian People. Of course, some of us didn't survive. Many Tribes and cultures have since vanished without a trace, following the arrival of those sailing ships. Since that fateful day in 1492, much has happened to Indian People, and those of us who have persevered, are here to stay. Self-Governance among Indian Tribes existed, if not in name, at least in practice, prior to Columbus.

Today, Self-Governance has resurfaced in the form of creating a "new partnership" and re-establishing a government-to-government relationship with those "visiting" governments that decided to stay. But, "divide and conquer" was their objective, not government-to-government relationships. Much to the dismay of many people not familiar with Tribal affairs, Native American Tribes have been, and always will be, sovereigns.

The Tribal Leaders that struggled for the return of this self-rule concept have been fighting an uphill battle – with entrenched Federal agency bureaucrats, and others who still feel that Tribes need paternalistic care and guidance in order to survive. There has been some positive acceptance, however, of Self-Governance in the Congress and among the Federal policy-makers – as many of them have seen the ability of Tribes to meet and deal with critical issues, face to face, as equals, and walk away shaking hands. Dr. Eddie Brown, former Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior, in his statement before the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs applauded "the statesman-like conduct of Tribal leaders and staff in the development of this program."

The Recent History

For the past five years, the Quinault Indian Nation, along with nine other Tribes nationwide, has been involved in the Self-Governance Demonstration Project, which was authorized for implementation by Congress in 1988. In the ensuing years, at least twenty other Tribes have stepped forward toward Self-Governance. We have taken great strides since our first year of planning, and, as we enter our third year of implementation, it is time to consider our accomplishments, our shortcomings, and learn from them; then, look toward the future.

Tribal councils, Tribal staff, and community members alike, have all felt the growing pains and experienced the adjustments that come along with change. Our Business Council follows a budget process – similar to a Congressional appropriations process, and quite often has had to make extremely difficult decisions regarding under-funded programs and limited budget allocations. The needs at the Tribal level still far outweigh the funds available. Self-Governance is not a needs-based program, as Federal dollars are limited. But, Self-Governance provides Tribes with the flexibility to meet some of those needs, where they were not being met before.

These Tribal staff and program managers of our many important programs have experienced increased responsibilities and workloads as a result of Self-Governance. And, our Tribal communities have received and participated in these services. So, where do we go from here, and what can we do to improve our programs, reduce the bureaucracy we've grown so accustomed to over the past century or so, and create new and innovative programs for our Tribal members? These questions and the resulting decisions to be made will be shaped by the Tribes, themselves.

The Year of Creativity and Innovations

This is the year for creativity and innovation, and the time has come for Tribal Councils, program managers, and Tribal communities to be "INVENTORS." Because many Tribes have been under the control of Federal agencies for nearly a century now, it is difficult to imagine that we have the ability to decide for ourselves what we want or don't want. But, I know that new ideas and innovations in Tribal programs and services will stem from the Self-Governance Demonstration Project. And this will be the focus of the Project this year – to share these innovations with other Tribes. The concept of sharing is an ageless tradition among Tribes.

As we embark upon new frontiers in formerly BIA-funded programs, and into new areas like Indian Health Service and other Federal agencies, we need to keep our perspective at all times. We have no intention of assuming any-and-all Federal programs that provide funding to Indian Tribes. Self-Governance is a rational, selective and flexible process.

Throughout the development, planning, negotiation and implementation phases of the Self-Governance Demonstration Project, Compact Tribes have maintained that careful planning and research are important to all Tribes that desire the return to self-rule.

The process has been painstaking; resulting in countless hours of debate and discussion; workshops for education and communication purposes, and tens of thousands of miles of travel to and from these workshops and to Washington D.C. to discuss with legislators, face-to-face, the importance of this historic initiative. The same is true for our Federal counterparts in the Bureau of Indian Affairs – who have invested many hours of time and travel into our Self-Governance workshops, negotiations preparations and restructuring efforts to accommodate the shift in roles from day-to-day managers of Tribal affairs to advocates and protectors of Tribal rights.

The Future of Self-Governance

Self-Governance does not, by itself, mean sovereignty. But Self-Governance can provide the mechanism for Tribes to make decisions as sovereigns. Through Tribal decision-making, Tribal responsibility and control, the pathway to true sovereignty can be realized. From a Tribe's perspective, it is simply independence and the freedom of choice. We, at Quinault, share the opportunity and challenge to creatively shape Quinault Self-Governance for everyone's benefit.

Spring 1993 Conference: The Draft Agenda

Overview:

The overall purpose of the Self-Governance Spring Conference is to address issues for the successful implementation of self-governance administratively and legislatively. Thus, the conference will have two main themes. The first is a continued discussion of administrative issues and concerns for the improvement of self-governance. The second is proposed self-governance legislation.

The conference, scheduled for March 28-31 in Washington D.C., will start on Sunday evening at 8 p.m. with a welcome and discussion of progress since the last conference, an overview of next two-and-a-half days, and addresses by several Tribal leaders regarding their self-governance experience. Monday will be devoted to administrative issues of the project and Tuesday will continue administrative concerns focusing on determing tribal shares, residuals, BIA restructuring and shortfall. The last half of the day will deal with proposed self-governance legislation.

The conference will conclude on Wednesday morning with a meeting in the Department of the Interior's auditorium when there will be a presentation of the IHS self-governance project, a summary of the first two days, and possibly an address given by Secretary Babbitt. If Secretary Babbitt is unable to attend, the final session will be held at the hotel.

Sunday, March 28

8:00 – 10:00 p.m. – **Welcome, Conference Overview and Progress since last Conference** *Bill Lavell*

Self-Governance Report from Tribal Leaders

Monday, March 29

Self-Governance Implementation

Administrative Issues and Concerns

8:00 – 10:00 a.m. – **Preparing for the negotiation of the 1994 Annual Funding Agreements**

- Overview of BIA's 1994 budget *Gary Ceccucci*

Identification of major increases and decreases that could affect negotiations and a discussion of the base budgets proposed for Quinault, Lummi, Jamestown and Hoopa for 1994 with possible expansion to other Tribes.

- Guidance for conducting 1994 negotiations *Bill Lavelle*

Pre-negotiation, negotiation and the certification process.

- Fund distribution process for 1994 *Arlene Brown*

Process for reconciling and verifying negotiated numbers following Congressional appropriation for FY 1994 and roles to be played by the BIA and Tribal budget officers and the Office of Self-Governance.

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. – **BREAK**

10:30 – Noon – **Concurrent Sessions**

Group One: Regulation Waiver and Redesigning Tribal Programs

Panel One: Redesigning Tribal Programs: what does it take to redesign a Tribal program? Several Tribes will describe what they have done or are in the process of doing to redesign programs.

Panel Two: Process of Waiving a Regulation: Once a Tribal program has been redesigned, what are the steps that need to be taken to obtain a waiver from the Secretary?

Waiver Procedures *Sharee Freeman*
Waiver Request Sheet *Tom Shirilla*

Group Two: Tribal and BIA finance session

Panel: Arlene Brown and Tribal Financial Support Group

Each Self-Governance and planning Tribe and each BIA area office should have a finance person present to be briefed on the forms and process to be used for negotiating 1994 annual funding agreements and the fund distribution process.

Group Three: Reporting on the Self-Governance Demonstration Project – What are the costs and benefits to Tribes and federal government?

Facilitators: *Raynette Finkbonner*
Tom Shirilla, Ken Reinfeld

Status report on the first annual assessment.
Plans for the second annual assessment.
Report on baseline measurements report.

Noon – 1:30 p.m. – **LUNCH**

1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – **Concurrent Sessions**

Group One: Trust Assessments – Report on the 1992 Experience and thoughts for 1993 *Karole Overberg*

Group Two: Indirect Costs and contract support – what are they and how are they being handled?

Panel *Bruce Johnson*, IG Sacramento
Ron Brown, OSG
Bill Parkhurst, Quinault Tribe

3:00 – 3:30 – **BREAK**

3:30 – 5:00 – **Sub-Group Sessions on the roles and responsibilities of Self-Governance Tribes, the BIA and OSG.**

Self-Governance Tribes are assuming increasing responsibilities for a much wider range of affairs. BIA officials must assume different roles and responsibilities under Self-Governance. What are some of these new responsibilities and what expectations do the Tribes and the BIA have of each other, and are these realistic? What expectations do the Tribes and the BIA have of OSG and are these realistic given the staff size of OSG?

Participants will be divided into three groups each with a moderator to discuss expectations that Self-Governance Tribes have of the BIA and OSG. Currently two memoranda dated December 22, 1992, broadly outline the roles and responsibilities of OSG and the BIA. Using these two memoranda as the guide, participants will create lists of considerations/recommendations. List one will identify functions that have been transferred from the BIA to the Tribes, the second list will identify what OSG is expected to do and the third list is what is expected from the BIA. These three lists will be further broken down by whether the recommendation/consideration originated from a Tribe, the BIA or OSG.

Yellow Sub-Group
Green Sub-Group
Blue Sub-Group

Financial Management Group: Financial managers of the Tribe and the BIA will continue an in-depth review with Arlene Brown and Tribal Financial Support Group.

5:00 – 5:30 – **BREAK**

5:30 – 7:00 – **Tribal Caucus if desired**

Tuesday, March 30

Determining Tribal Shares, Residuals, BIA Restructuring and Shortfall

8:00 – 9:30 a.m. – **Overview of Determining Tribal Shares**

Description of the current process for determining Tribal shares
Summary of Draft Tribal Share Issue Paper
Residuals for trust, non-trust and general administration accounts
Use of Shortfall funding and BIA restructuring

9:30 – 10:00 – **BREAK**

10:00 – Noon – Group discussion regarding determining Tribal shares and residuals for trust and non-trust programs

Yellow Sub-Group
Green Sub-Group
Blue Sub-Group

Each sub-group will deal with the same set of discussion questions.

- One set will deal with the residual level that should be assumed in determining Tribal shares. Focus should be on identifying spe-

Continued next page)

Salish Kootenai Score Many Firsts

It is not uncommon for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to do things first. They were the first to adopt a constitution under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1935. They were already operating many of their own programs prior to the Self Determination Act of 1974. They were the first to take over their own electric utility district, first in the Northwest to establish an accredited Tribal community college and first in the nation to designate a large Tribal wilderness preservation, the Mission Mountain Wilderness Area.

Little wonder that this confederation of Tribes, located on a 1.2 million acre reservation in the mountainous region of Montana, is also the first to hold out for complete direct access to the federal Office of Management and Budget in its Self-Governance process.

"We realize that Self-Governance is a process that will have a profound impact on our relationship with the United States government for generations to come," said Tribal Self-Governance Coordinator Greg Dumontier. "It is not just an instrument for funding. We are not restricting the Self-Governance Demonstration Project to the notion that the compact agreement is the outcome. It is the redefining of the government-to-government relationship that extends back to the signing of the Treaty of Hellgate in 1855."

Others may see the Self-Governance process merely as an annual funding agreement, according to Dumontier. "Over the years, the Bureau of Indian Affairs did reduce the principle of self-determination to a procurement contract, with many strings attached. Our opinion is that the federal government needs the blessing of our people and our government to provide services on the Flathead Reservation. In fact, we insist that all proposed budgets that include services and functions on the reservation must have the approval of the tribal council. The Tribe, itself, is best qualified to say which programs are top priority, and how money should be spent here," he said. "This is what sovereignty means."

The Confederation does not do things in a small way. Its annual budget centers around $60 million in contracts and grants, which the council invests in the interests of 6,700 Tribal members.

"We don't have our Self-Governance compact in place. But we are nonetheless organized to function on a government-to-government basis. After all, this is a decision-making process, not a funding instrument. In the future, we may entertain the notion of getting into a compact for all of our programs. But, for now, the hold-up is on the federal side. We had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with former Assistant Secretary Brown that opened the door for us to go directly to OMB to talk budget."

The MOU provided a unique approach and the Confederation had apparently scored another first.

"Then, when all was said and done, the Bureau changed its mind, and told us they couldn't allow this to happen," said Dumontier. "We were told they were afraid of the precedent it might set. But our position is that we have a right, through the government-to-government process, to deal direct with OMB, and that it is paternalistic of the BIA to forbid it."

For the time being, there appears to be an impasse. But, says Dumontier, the Tribes have waited 100 years to straighten out their relationship with the federal government... "We can't expect to make things right in a year or two. We will go back again and again and again, until we win. The government-to-government relationship is effective with the Congressional and Judicial branches of government...but when it comes to the Executive branch, things get bogged down in the bureaucracy. Their excuse that opening the door for us would mean they would have to open it to 500 Tribes...just doesn't wash. This is a demonstration project. We're not developing a process to be used by every Tribe, but just for us. Our right to have true government-to-government relations with the Executive branch of the federal government dates back to our treaty, and the rights we retained in that treaty. Period. We want to carry forward with that process. We believe the principle is sound, and that we are acting in the best interest of our people. That is what sovereignty is all about."

Spring Conference Agenda *(cont'd)*

cific functions that will be performed by the BIA for trust, non-trust and general administration accounts for alternative residuals levels. (For purposes of this discussion, trust programs relate to physical resources.) It might be that residual levels should vary between programs and between Tribes.

- A second set will focus on the issues that should be considered in facilitating the site specific restructuring of BIA in response to Self-Governance Tribes and other 638 activity?
- A third set of questions will address shortfall funding and what it should be used for.

Noon – 1:30 – **Lunch**

1:30 – 3:30

Self-Governance Implementation

Overview of Recommended Self-Governance Legislation

Panel: Representatives from the Drafting Group: *Bill Lavell, Ron Allen, Phil Baker-Shenk, Paul Alexander*

3:30 – 3:45 – **BREAK**

3:45 – 5:30 – **Sub-Group Discussion of Proposals**

Three Sub-Groups will be formed to discuss the proposals, identify issues and concerns, and make recommendations to the drafting sub-group. Each Sub-Group will have a facilitator who is a member of the drafting group, and a recorder.

Green Sub-Group
Facilitators: *Ron Allen*
Deanna Fairbanks
Recorder: *Joe Tallakson*

Yellow Sub-Group
Facilitators: *Paul Alexander*
Dan Duane
Recorder: *Ken Reinfeld*

Blue Sub-Group
Facilitators: *Merle Boyd*
Charles Head,
Phil Baker-Shenk
Recorder: *Cyndi Holmes*

Wednesday, March 31

8:00 – 9:00 a.m. – **Indian Health Service Update and Preparations for FY 1994 Negotiations**

Doug Black – Indian Health Service

Tribal Panel: Representatives from Sax & Fox, Hoopa, Mille Lacs

Self-Governance Implementation

Summary of Administrative and Legislative Issues

9:00 – 11:00 – **Summary of Issues and Recommendations**

11:00 – 11:30 – BREAK

11:30 – Noon – **Address by Secretary Babbitt** (Unconfirmed)

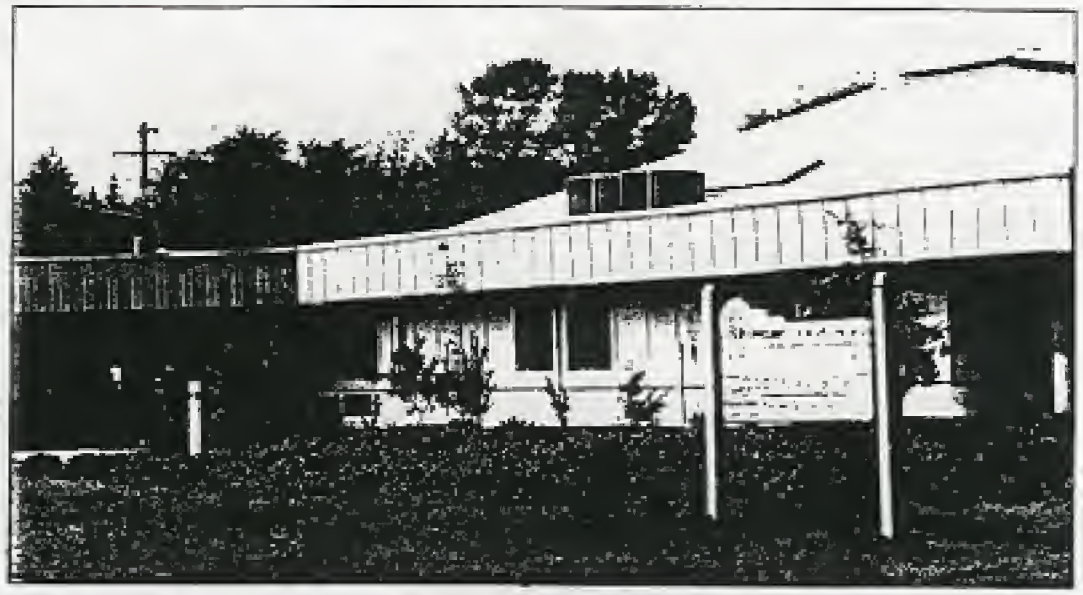
Noon – 12:30 – Concluding Remarks

Bill Lavell

Siletz: "The Comeback Tribe"

You've heard of the "Comeback Kid." How about the "Comeback Tribe"?

In 1955, the Siletz Tribe was terminated by the United States government, an experience that might be likened to being KO'd by an uppercut or a strong right cross. But like the tenacious downed boxer who somehow musters the strength to get back up and fight on to victory, the Siletz got back up on their feet, too. And in 1977, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz became the second Tribe in U.S. history to be restored to federal recognition.



It was a new beginning for this confederation of 24 Indian bands that originally ranged from northern California to southern Washington. Just a beginning.

Since that time, the Siletz have reinvented their form of government, established an outstanding health clinic, established the independent Siletz Tribal Economic Development Corporation (STEDCO), developed a vibrant housing program, and become an active participant in the Self-Governance Demonstration Project.

"It's been an interesting process," says Tribal Chair Delores Pigsley. "We serve 2200 tribal members, on and off our reservation. We have members in all the metropolitan areas of western Oregon, and we want to be able to provide services to them all. The planning process we have gone through with Self-Governance has really helped. We're much better off, much more capable of serving all our people because of this process."

"We *are* much better off," agreed Tribal Self-Governance Coordinator Nelson Witt, who is also the Tribe's Chief Executive Officer. "The fact that the Siletz Tribe was terminated has made things difficult through the years. But our resolve to overcome such difficulties has put us on an upward path. We have become more and more independent, more responsible for all our programs. By the time we decided to go with Self-Governance, it was clear that it was the logical next step we had to take. And we're going to keep on taking the steps we need to take, contracting for all BIA programs, for all Indian Health programs, and so on...to be more in control of our own destiny."

The Tribe's central office is located in the town of Siletz, 23 miles southeast of Lincoln City, on the beautiful Oregon coast. Prior to being terminated, the Tribe had a huge reservation. With reinstatement, it secured 3600 acres of public domain land, scattered tracts, primarily located in Oregon's coastal range. The patchwork nature of the ownership makes for many management challenges. The service area of the Tribe includes 11 counties, with regional offices in Portland, Salem and Springfield. The Tribe is looking at the possibility of restoring more of the former reservation, i.e., possibly acquiring some of the public domain land in Lincoln County.

Substantial progress in programs has been made to provide members educational opportunities and employment assistance. The Head Start program is offered. There is a cultural program and library. The Tribe sponsors the second largest Pow Wow in the state in mid-August. And there is a vibrant elders' program and food distrubtion program. Vocational training has been effective. The Tribe employs about 120, and functions with growing efficiency.

The Siletz Community Health Clinic, which opened in 1991, provides medical/dental services to Tribal members and non-Indians from the Siletz community and the surrounding area. Services are comprehensive and include "deferred services", such as eye care, hearing aids and elective surgery.

The Tribe's Economic Development Corporation was formed as an independent entity to develop economic enterprises that create employment opportunities and foster the economic and social betterment of Tribal members. STEDCO projects include marketing tribal timber and the Siletz Smokehouse in Depoe Bay. A custom box manufacturing plant has recently been purchased and other forms of economic development are being explored.

The Tribe is developing an integrated resource management plan which will be under the supervision of the Natural Resources Department. The program will include timber resources management, which is already in place, and will further address the needs of salmon, eel and other wildlife for survival. This program places the Tribe at the heart of environmental activities in the region, as well as economic activities directly dependent on healthy natural resources.

"The planning process we have gone through with Self-Governance has really helped. We're much better off, much more capable of serving all our people because of this process."

-Delores Pigsley
Siletz Tribal Chair

One of the Tribe's most impressive projects has been the restructuring of its government. It now operates with a highly effective system of checks and balances involving three distinct branches of government...the judicial, legislative and administrative. The Tribal court operates independently from the council, reviewing council decisions for constitutionality. The council serves in the legislative capacity, establishing regulations. And Mr. Witt oversees the administrative end of things, enforcing the regulations established by the council. All in all it's a system that works very well, he said.

"And it's a system that works hand-in-hand with the Self-Governance program," said Pigsley. "Not only does the Self-Governance approach generate more funding to support our programs. It also supports our independence and sovereignty."

Timber Symposium Slated by Hoopa

Among the many natural resources Self-Governance Tribes have increased control over due to the expanded roles of Tribal Councils in the Self-Governance process....are trees.

Managed wisely, trees offer the prospect of expanded Tribal income and employment, concurrently with the perpetual values of natural beauty, spiritual strength, a source of medicine and protecting habitat for fish and wildlife.

Obviously, forests are a resource of great significance to many Tribes.

So what better location could there be to schedule the Seventeenth Annual National Indian Timber Symposium than among the giant Redwoods of Northern California?

Yes, there are more accessible locations. But nowhere will you find more majestic forests. These are the tallest trees in the world, many of which first sprouted from the ground two thousand years before Europeans ever set foot on this continent. They have sheltered and protected the indigenous people of the region for countless generations, as well as inspiring their culture and providing for their livelihood.

The Timber Symposium, hosted by the Hoopa Valley Tribe, will be held March 29 – April 2, at the Eureka Inn in Eureka, California. The theme of the symposium this year is "Managing for a Healthy Forest – Fostering Understanding through Communication". As the theme implies, much of the agenda will emphasize communication in forestry through addresses and discussions about management practices, as well as through presentations and updates on issues of concern by a variety of tribal and non-tribal speakers. Some primary areas of emphasis will include: Applying Treaty Rights Off Reservation, What's Happening in Indian Resources, The Future Is Our Responsibility, Indian Policy Updates, and workshops on Communication, Integrating Diverse Forest Resources, and Identifying Forest Health. Also scheduled are the Annual Intertribal Timber Council Business Meeting, a Legislative Update, an opportunity to meet Jim Howe, new Chief Forester for the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Division of Forestry, and introduction of the new Office of Native American Trust and an annual Awards Banquet and Dance. Of special note is a planned meeting between Self-Governance timber Tribes and BIA forestry personnel on improved communications and new respective roles and responsibilities.

Also featured will be a tour of the Hoopa Valley Tribe. Participants in the tour will be bussed through Redwood forests, with stops to focus on timber harvest operations using northern spotted owl guidelines, on the management of competing vegetation and on sustained yield timber management on steep land with such constraints as multiple stream zones and geological slope stability problems.

For more information, contact the Intertribal Timber Council: 4370 N.E. Halsey St., Portland, Oregon 97213. Or call (503) 282-4296.

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